



October 12, 2011

Dear Chairman Kowall and members of the Senate Economic Development Committee:

The Michigan Manufacturers Association is a strong supporter of the New International Bridge Crossing. We urge your support of SB 410 (Richardville) and SB 411 (Richardville).

Manufacturing is the largest sector of the Michigan economy accounting for 19% of the private industry gross state product. Our members are involved in the full spectrum of manufacturing activities ranging from the chemical industry to furniture, the pulp and paper industry to the auto industry, cement to pharmaceutical, tool, die and mold to food manufacturing. International trade is essential to a large manufacturing economy like Michigan's. In 2010, Michigan beat the US in real gross domestic product growth with 2.6% nationally and 29% in Michigan, half of that growth was driven by durable goods manufacturers. The House Fiscal agency also reported that manufacturing is leading in job growth in Michigan with the highest sector employment increase from Nov. 2009 to Nov. 2010. Canada is currently our largest trading partner with about \$350 billion in exports and about \$300 billion in imports from Canada. \$120 billion of that trade flows through Detroit each year. The auto industry which currently accounts for about 20% of the trade between U.S. and Canada, relies heavily on the Detroit trade corridor as parts move back and forth. The House Fiscal Agency estimated that light vehicle sales will increase by 32.1% between 2010 and 2013, which indicates increased need for a faster trade route with Canada at Detroit.

Manufacturing needs an expressway to expressway connection to ensure a timely transfer of goods to meet the ever increasing speed of the global economy. Just in time manufacturing techniques require reliable and fast transportation routes. The current route requires as many as 17 stop lights through Windsor before getting to an expressway. That is not the model of an efficient 21 century transportation trade corridor. The future cannot rely on an 80 year old bridge that dumps into a congested downtown environment. An additional span at that location is plagued with the same logistic constraints as the current bridge. It should be instructive that Canada does not support an additional span at that location.

Michigan must look to the future to compete effectively in the global economy. We are a large manufacturing state and to remain competitive we must create an infrastructure that supports a 21 century manufacturing economy.

MMA will record votes on SB 410 and SB 411 in our key vote effort. We encourage your support of these pro-manufacturing bills.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Mike Johnston', is written over a horizontal line.

Mike Johnston
VP of Government Affairs